

From: Steve Schiff
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 12:25pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

As a technology professional, I have been following the Microsoft case in the news fairly closely. I am writing to express my deep dissatisfaction with the settlement of the case as it stands today.

I believe that Microsoft wields near monopoly power through the monopoly of the desktop operating system, which they have extended to a monopoly on office applications, the browser, and now, through the .net initiative, to the very infrastructure of the Internet.

Having been a party to many business planning sessions as a technology professional, I can tell you that it is tantamount to career suicide to propose writing end user applications to any platform except Windows. It is becoming increasingly difficult to propose infrastructure alternatives to windows in the data center.

In my view, left intact, Microsoft will eventually own the end to end application environment. This ownership will allow Microsoft to extend its dominance to services albeit at a slower pace.

While I believe a structural remedy to be the most productive resolution to the case, and one which would unlock the most shareholder value, I believe that an alternative exists, which is quite simple to enforce and to demand:

Microsoft should be required to provide their applications and application services on a minimum of three alternative operating systems.

This would have the effect of increasing acceptance and adoption of alternative operating system and processor options, and would in turn create an environment where alternative server operating system and applications could compete on a more level playing field.

Please focus on this case. It is critical that the government do more than the present settlement to assure a competitive technology environment which will continue to secure the US dominant role in technology innovation.

Regards,

Steve Schiff